

BEFORE THE KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA SERVICES TRIBUNAL PESHAWAR.

Service Appeal No. 7407/2021

BEFORE: MRS. RASHIDA BANO ... MEMBER (J)
MR. MUHAMMAD AKBAR KHAN... MEMBER (E)

Amjid Afridi, Ex-Constable No. 1985/248, R/o Village Mera Mashogagar,
Badaber, District Peshawar. ... (Appellant)

VERSUS

1. The Inspector General of Police, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar.
 2. Commandant, FRP, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar.
 3. Deputy Commandant FRP, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar.
- (Respondents)

Mr. Noor Muhammad Khattak,
Advocate --- For appellant

Mr. Asif Masood Ali Shah,
Deputy District Attorney --- For respondents

Date of Institution.....30.08.2021
Date of Hearing29.04.2024
Date of Decision29.04.2024

JUDGMENT

RASHIDA BANO, MEMBER (J): The service appeal in hand has
been instituted under Section-4 of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Service
Tribunal Act, 1974 with the following prayer:-

“That on acceptance of this appeal the impugned orders dated 11.12.2018 and Appellate 11.06.2021 may very kindly be set aside and the appellant may kindly be reinstated into service with all back benefits. Any other remedy which this august Tribunal deems fit that may also be awarded in favor of the appellant.”

2. Precise facts as gleaned from the record are that the appellant was appointed as Constable in Police Department vide order dated 29.08.2014. Departmental inquiry was initiated against the appellant on the allegation of absence from duty with effect from 04.06.2018



without any leave/permission of the competent authority. On conclusion of the departmental inquiry, the appellant was removed from service from the date of his absence i.e 04.06.2018 and the period of absence was treated as absence from duty without pay vide impugned order dated 11.12.2018. The appellant preferred departmental appeal, which was rejected vide order dated 04.01.2019, there-after the appellant filed revision petition before the Inspector General of Police, who remanded the case of the appellant back to appellate authority for conducting de-novo inquiry, however the same was rejected vide impugned order dated 20.11.2019. The appellant, there-after again filed revision petition, however the same was also rejected vide order dated 11.06.2021, hence the appellant filed the instant service appeal on 30.08.2021 for redressal of his grievance.

3. Respondents were put on notice who submitted their para-wise reply on the appeal.

4. Learned counsel for the appellant has argued that the absence of the appellant was not deliberate but was due to illness of his brother as well as illness of his mother. He next argued that the appellant was awarded punishment of removal from service with retrospective effect, therefore, the impugned order dated 11.12.2018 being void ab-initio is liable to be set-aside and even no limitation run against the impugned order of dismissal of the appellant. In the last, he requested that the impugned orders may be set-aside and the appellant may be reinstated in service with all back benefits.

5. Conversely, learned Deputy District Attorney for the respondents has contended that the appellant remained absent from

duty with effect from 04.06.2018 without any leave or permission of the competent authority. He next contended that all the legal and codal formalities as prescribed under Police Rules, 1975, therefore, the appellant was rightly removed from service. He further contended that the appeal in hand is barred by time, therefore, the same is liable to be set-aside on this score alone.

6. We heard the learned counsel for the appellant as well as learned Deputy District Attorney for the respondents and perused the case file with connected documents in detail.

7. We will have to decide first that whether impugned order passed by the competent authority vide which the appellant has been awarded punishment of removal from service with retrospective effect is void ab-initio and no limitation would run against the same. In our humble view this argument of the learned counsel for the appellant is misconceived. Though punishment could not be awarded with retrospective effect, however where a civil servant has been proceeded against departmentally on the ground of his absence from duty, then punishment could be awarded to him retrospectively from the date of his absence from duty and the same is an exception to the general rule that punishment could not be imposed with retrospective effect. Worthy, apex court in its judgment reported as 2022 PLC (C.S.) 1177 has observed as below:-

“8. We find that the impugned judgment has totally ignored the record and facts of this case. The department has also been totally negligent in pursuing this matter and has allowed the Respondent to remain absent from duty for so long. On the issue of retrospective

effect, we find that admittedly, the respondent has been absent from duty w.e.f. 01.09.2003, hence no illegality is made out by considering his dismissal from there as he has not worked with the department since the given date. (Emphasis provided)."

8. Moreover, even void orders are required to be challenged within period of limitation provided by law. Supreme Court of Pakistan in its judgment reported as 2023 SCMR 866 has held as below:-

"6. Adverting to the arguments of learned ASC for the petitioner that there is no limitation against a void order, we find that in the first place, the learned ASC has not been able to demonstrate before us how the order of dismissal was a void order. In addition, this Court has repeatedly held that limitation would run even against a void order and an aggrieved party must approach the competent forum for redressal of his grievance within the period of limitation provided by law. This principle has consistently been upheld, affirmed and reaffirmed by this Court and is now a settled law on the subject. Reference in this regard may be made to Parvez Musharraf v. Nadeem Ahmed (Advocate) (PLD 2014 SC 585) where a 14 member Bench of this Court approved the said Rule. Reference in this regard may also be made to Muhammad Sharif v. MCB Bank Limited (2021 SCMR 1158) and Wajdad v. Provincial Government (2020 SCMR 2046). (Emphasis supplied)"


9. A perusal of record reveals that appellant was removed from service vide impugned order dated 11.12.2018 on the allegation of absence from duty with effect from 04.06.2018 without any leave/permission of the competent authority. Appellant challenged the order dated 04.06.2018 through filing of departmental appeal, however the same was rejected vide order dated 04.01.2019.

There-after the appellant filed revision petition before the Inspector General of Police, which was also rejected vide order dated 20.11.2019, therefore, the appellant was required to have file service appeal before this Tribunal within 30 days, but he has filed the instant service appeal on 30.08.2021, which is badly barred by time. S

10. It is well settled that law favours the diligent and not the indolent. The appellant remained indolent and did not agitate the matter before the Service Tribunal within the period prescribed under the relevant law. This Tribunal can enter into merits of the case only, when the appeal is within time. Supreme Court of Pakistan in its judgment reported as 1987 SCMR 92 has held that when an appeal is required to be dismissed on the ground of limitation, its merits need not to be discussed.

11. In view of the above discussion, it is held that as the service appeal of the appellant was barred by time, therefore, the same stands dismissed being not competent. Parties are left to bear their own costs. File be consigned to the record room.

12. *Pronounced in open court in Peshawar and given under our hands and seal of the Tribunal this 29th day of April, 2024.*


(MUHAMMAD AKBAR KHAN)
Member (E)


(RASHIDA BANO)
Member (J)

22.04.2024 1. Learned counsel for the appellant present. Mr. Arshad Azam learned Assistant Advocate General for the respondents present.

2. Learned counsel for the appellant requested for adjournment in order to further prepare the brief. Absolute last chance is given to argue the case on the next date, failing which case will be decided on the basis of available record without providing further adjournments and chance of arguments. Adjourned. To come up for arguments on 29.04.2024 before D.B. P.P given to parties.

RECORDED
KPSI
Peshawar



(Fareeha Paul)
Member (E)



(Rashida Bano)
Member (J)

Kaleemullah

ORDER

29th April, 2024

1. Learned counsel for the appellant present. Mr. Asif Masood Ali Shah, Deputy District Attorney for the respondents present. Arguments heard and record perused.

2. Vide our judgment of today placed on file, it is held that as the service appeal of the appellant was barred by time, therefore, the same stands dismissed being not competent. Parties are left to bear their own costs. File be consigned to the record room.

3. *Pronounced in open Court at Peshawar and given under our hands and the seal of the Tribunal on this 29th day of April, 2024.*



(Muhammad Akbar Khan)
Member (Executive)



(Rashida Bano)
Member (Judicial)